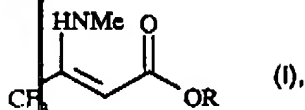


J #5/B

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Original): A process for the preparation of a 4,4,4-trifluoro-3-methylamino-crotonic acid ester of formula I



wherein

R is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>alkyl, and

Me is methyl,

by dehydrating the corresponding trifluoroacetoacetic acid ester and methylamine in the presence of an inert reaction medium and of a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>carboxylic acid, in which process the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from 75 to 100°C without isolation of intermediates and the water that forms during the reaction is removed continuously from the reaction medium.

Claim 2 (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein in formula I R is ethyl.

Claim 3 (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein a water-immiscible reaction medium is used and the aqueous phase is separated from the reaction medium.

Claim 4 (Currently amended): A process according to claim 1, wherein ~~the appropriate~~ an alcohol is added to the reaction medium and the water is removed by distillation.

Claim 5 (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein acetic acid is used as the C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub> carboxylic acid.

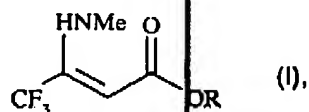
Claim 6 (Original): A process according to claim 1, which is carried out at a temperature of from 80 to 85°C.

Claim 7 (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein there is used as the reaction medium hexane, cyclohexane, methylcyclohexane, toluene, xylene, or a mixture thereof.

Claim 8 (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein methylcyclohexane is used as the reaction medium.

Claim 9 (Previously added): A process according to claim 4, wherein the alcohol is ethanol.

Claim 10 (Previously added): A method for the preparation in a yield greater than 80% of a 4,4,4-trifluoro-3-methylamino-crotonic acid ester of formula I



wherein

R is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>alkyl, and

Me is methyl,

by dehydrating the corresponding trifluoroacetoacetic acid ester and methylamine in the presence of an inert reaction medium and of a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>carboxylic acid, in which process the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from 75 to 100° C without isolation of intermediates and the water that forms during the reaction is removed continuously from the reaction medium.